What is claimed is:

1. A method for evaluating the merits of a plurality of business opportunities, comprising the steps of:

identifying a first set of potential business opportunities of interest to a business from an initial, larger pool of business opportunities;

analyzing the first set of business opportunities by having a group of persons evaluate them using an elimination tool which generates a set of data, said data providing for a ranking of said business opportunities in the first set;

culling from the first set of business opportunities a reduced second set of business opportunities having sufficiently high ranking;

analyzing the second set of business opportunities to determine a numerical first characteristic and a numerical second characteristic for each of them; and

providing a graphical representation of the first and second characteristics for at least some of the business opportunities in the second set.

2. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the initial, larger pool of business opportunities is identified by examining publications of interest.

3. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the first set of potential business opportunities is characterized by a disproportionate amount of recent publicity.

4. A method as set forth in claim 3, wherein the first set of potential business opportunities is characterized by little publicity prior to a selected date.

5. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein web pages are searched for business opportunities.

6. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the elimination tool comprises a set of criteria for judging the first set of business opportunities.

7. A method as set forth in claim 6, wherein the criteria include an evaluation of the uniqueness of the opportunity.

8. A method as set forth in claim 6, wherein the criteria include an evaluation of the advantages of the business opportunity over other business opportunities.

9. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein each of the business opportunities is evaluated by each of the persons.

10. A method as set forth in claim 6, wherein each person provides a score for each of the criteria for every business that the persona evaluates.

11. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the elimination tool provides a statistical summary of the numerical rankings.

12. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein a computer is used to collect and analyze the data generated by use of the elimination tool.

13. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein a computer is used to determine the first and second characteristics.

14. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the first numerical characteristic is a measure of the usability of the business opportunity.

15. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the second numerical characteristic is a measure of the ease with which the opportunity can be acquired.

16. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the numerical first and second characteristics are determined by evaluating a business opportunity according to first and second sets of criteria.

17. A method as set forth in claim 16, wherein a single person determines numerical rankings for the criteria.

18. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the numerical values of the first and second characteristics determine whether the business opportunity is one that should be pursued by an approach selected from the group consisting of adoption, partnering, and investing.

19. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the numerical values of the first and second characteristics are plotted on a graph.

20. A method as set forth in claim 19, wherein the graph is in the form of a matrix.

21. A method as set forth in claim 20, wherein the matrix is divided into nine rectangles which are labeled by at least one of the words adopt, partner, invest, and ignore.

22. A method for evaluating the merits of a plurality of technologies for acquisition by a business, comprising the steps of:

identifying a first set of potential technologies of interest to a business from an initial, larger pool of technologies;

analyzing the first set of technologies by having a group of persons evaluate them using an elimination tool which generates a set of data, said data providing for a ranking of said technologies in the first set;

culling from the first set of technologies a reduced second set of technologies

having sufficiently high ranking;

analyzing the second set of technologies to determine a numerical first characteristic and a numerical second characteristic for each of them,

providing a graphical representation of the first and second characteristics for at least some of the technologies in the second set.

23. A method as set forth in claim 22, wherein the initial, larger pool of technologies is identified by examining publications of interest.

24. A method as set forth in claim 22, wherein the first set of potential technologies is characterized by a disproportionate amount of recent publicity.

25. A method as set forth in claim 24, wherein the first set of potential technologies is characterized by little publicity prior to a selected date.

26. A method as set forth in claim 22, wherein web pages are searched for technologies.

27. A method as set forth in claim 22, wherein the elimination tool comprises a set of criteria for judging the first set of technologies.

28. A method as set forth in claim 27, wherein the criteria include an evaluation of the uniqueness of the technology.

29. A method as set forth in claim 27, wherein the criteria include an evaluation of the advantages of the technology over other technologies.

30. A method as set forth in claim 22, wherein each of the business opportunities is evaluated by each of the persons.

31. A method as set forth in claim 27, wherein each person provides a score for each of the criteria for every business that the persona evaluates.

32. A method as set forth in claim 22, wherein the elimination tool provides a statistical summary of the numerical rankings.

33. A method as set forth in claim 22, wherein a computer is used to collect and analyze the data generated by use of the elimination tool.

34. A method as set forth in claim 22, wherein a computer is used to determine the first and second characteristics.

35. A method as set forth in claim 22, wherein the first numerical characteristic is a measure of the usability of the technology.

36. A method as set forth in claim 22, wherein the second numerical characteristic is a measure of the ease with which the technology can be acquired.

37. A method as set forth in claim 22, wherein the numerical first and second characteristics are determined by evaluating a technology according to first and second sets of criteria.

38. A method as set forth in claim 37, wherein a single person determines numerical rankings for the criteria.

39. A method as set forth in claim 22, wherein the numerical values of the first and second characteristics determine whether the business opportunity is one that should be pursued by an approach selected from the group consisting of adoption, partnering, and investing.

40. A method as set forth in claim 22, wherein the numerical values of the first and second characteristics are plotted on a graph.

41. A method as set forth in claim 40, wherein the graph is in the form of a matrix.

42. A method as set forth in claim 41, wherein the matrix is divided into nine rectangles which are labeled by at least one of the words adopt, partner, invest, and ignore.

43. An apparatus for evaluating the merits of a plurality of technologies for acquisition by a business, comprising:

means for identifying a first set of potential technologies of interest to a business from an initial, larger pool of technologies;

means for analyzing the first set of technologies by having a group of persons evaluate them using an elimination tool which generates a set of data, said data providing for a ranking of said technologies in the first set;

means for culling from the first set of technologies a reduced second set of technologies having sufficiently high ranking;

means for analyzing the second set of technologies to determine a numerical first characteristic and a numerical second characteristic for each of them; and

means for providing a graphical representation of the first and second characteristics for at least some of the technologies in the second set.

44. An apparatus as set forth in claim 43, wherein the means for identifying a first set of potential technologies comprises a computer.

45. An apparatus as set forth in claim 43, wherein the means for analyzing the first set of technologies comprises a set of numerically gradable criteria provided to the persons.

46. An apparatus as set forth in claim 43, wherein the means for culling from the first set of technologies a reduced second set of technologies comprises a computer.

47. An apparatus as set forth in claim 43, wherein the means for analyzing the second set of technologies comprises both human judgement and machine calculation.

48. An apparatus as set forth in claim 43, wherein the means for providing a graphical representation comprise a matrix.